



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
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MCO 1754.8A
RA
27 May 03

MARINE CORPS ORDER 1754.8A

From: Commandant of the Marine Corps
To: Distribution List

Subj: MARINE FOR LIFE PROGRAM (M4L PROGRAM)

Ref: (a) White Letter No. 09-02
(b) ALMAR 068/02
(c) United States Marine Corps Charter for the Marine For Life
(M4L) Program Executive Steering Committee, ACMC 5000 RAP
dtd 1 Jul 02 (NOTAL)
(d) 10 U.S.C. 58
(e) DOD Directive 1332.25 of December 9, 1993

Encl: (1) Sample Letter of Recognition

1. Situation. This Order establishes policies and procedures for the implementation and sustained operation of the M4L Program. References (a) and (b) provided interim guidance. This Order amplifies reference (b). Reference (c) establishes the M4L Executive Steering Committee. This revision changes the intended organizational structure for the M4L program. When reaching full implementation, M4L will not be executed as part of Peacetime Wartime Support Teams (PWST), but rather as a M4L Individual Mobilization Augmentee Detachment (IMA Det).

2. Cancellation. MCO 1754.8.

3. Mission. The M4L Program is designed to expand transition assistance and provide sponsorship for the more than 27,000 Marines who honorably leave active service each year and return to civilian life. Marines, active and Reserve, serving in local communities throughout our nation will act as sponsors for transitioning Marines by providing information and points of contact for employment opportunities, housing, education, and other matters. The M4L Program formally extends our commitment to "take care of our own" and nurtures mutually beneficial relationships inherent in our ethos "Once A Marine, Always A Marine."

4. Execution

a. Commander's Intent and Concept of Operations

(1) Commander's Intent. The M4L Program will ensure that no Marine who honorably wore the Eagle, Globe, and Anchor is lost to the Marine Corps family. By formalizing relationships with veteran Marines, Marine affiliated organizations, and others friendly to the Marine Corps, the M4L Program will coordinate sponsorship and assistance for Marines who have served honorably as they transition

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from active service to civilian careers. Commanders will promote the M4L paradigm of going the extra mile to take care of all of our Marines who serve honorably. Career Retention Specialists (CRS) will incorporate procedures for introducing the M4L program to Marines who decide to leave active service. The backbone of the M4L mission, however, will reside with Marines in the local community throughout our nation. They will develop the networks of people and organizations committed to assisting transitioning Marines. The M4L Program will reinforce the value of honorable service, provide needed support for Marine families, and further solidify our commitment to our ethos "Once a Marine, always a Marine."

(2) Concept of Operations

(a) The M4L Program represents an institutional effort to help Marines prepare for life after active duty. References (d) and (e) apply. Together these documents provide for formal transition assistance 180 days prior to separation from active duty until 90 days after. After 90 days, transitioning Marines will retain access to the M4L web site and are encouraged to continue using their contacts established through the M4L program.

(b) The M4L Program will leverage existing but informal associations between the Marine Corps and the civilian community. Marines located in communities throughout our nation will proactively seek out Marine friendly resources (people and organizations) and assess their desire to provide tangible assistance to transitioning Marines: employment opportunities, housing information, and guidance on educational opportunities and benefits. These local Marines, our Hometown Links (HTLs), will develop networks of resources to whom they can turn to help assist Marines leaving active duty. The HTL will contact transitioning Marines at their duty station and offer sponsorship and points of contact within the local network who can address specific needs. The physical location of HTLs will roughly correspond to the major geographic areas of our current Marine Corps Reserve sites and Recruiting infrastructure.

(c) A web-based customer relationship management software tool will link HTLs, transitioning Marines, resource networks, and the M4L HQ. The M4L HQ will deploy this production web site during the first quarter of FY04. In the interim, the pilot database, located at www.marineforlife.com, will continue to support the M4L effort.

(d) The HTL network currently consists of 71 Marines located in communities around the country. During the first quarter FY04, the HTL team will increase to 125 Marines. This will coincide with deployment of the production web site. By the end of FY04, the M4L program will achieve full implementation with approximately 147 HTLs. HTLs will develop local resource networks, focus the efforts of Marine Alumni in the area, and coordinate assistance for transitioning Marines. Reserve Component officers and staff noncommissioned officers serving on active duty will develop local networks during the implementation phase. Upon full implementation of M4L, scheduled for the end of FY04, HTLs will continue their duties in a drilling status as IMAs attached to the M4L IMA Det.

(e) Organizational Structure

1. M4L HQ. The M4L HQ resides at CMC(RA) under the direction of the Director, Reserve Affairs.

2. HTL Element. When fully operational in FY04, the HTL network will consist of approximately 147 HTLs (Staff Sergeant through Lieutenant Colonel), joined to the M4L IMA Det, whose billets will be located at Marine Reserve Centers. In some cases billets may be located at recruiting stations.

b. Tasks

(1) Executive Steering Committee. Per reference (c), DC, M&RA will chair the M4L Executive Steering Committee. Members are: Director, RA; Counsel to the Commandant (CL); CG, MCRC; COMMARCORSYSCOM; Legislative Assistant to the Commandant (OLA); Director, C4; Director, PA; and Director, SPD. The Executive Steering Committee will:

(a) Advise the CMC and the MROC on policy matters relating to:

1. Operational Requirements Documents (ORDs) and the Operational and Organizational Concept (O&O).

2. Force structure requirements.

3. M4L POM requirements.

(b) Monitor and evaluate the progress of M4L.

(2) Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs (M&RA)

(a) Ensure smooth coordination of M4L issues within your purview.

(b) Director, Reserve Affairs (RA)

1. Serve as the lead for the M4L program. Develop, coordinate, and implement the organizational structure and standard operating procedures for the conduct of the M4L mission.

a. Provide manning and oversight of daily operations of the M4L HQ element.

b. Ensure appropriate screening, hiring, and training of HTL team.

2. Coordinate with MARCORSYSCOM on the acquisition, development, deployment, and maintenance of the M4L information technology architecture: software, hardware, and associated policy issues.

3. Upon full implementation, scheduled for the end of FY04, ensure all HTLs serve in drilling status as members of the M4L IMA Det.

4. Revise this Order as necessary to reflect operations after achieving full implementation.

(c) Director, Manpower Management (MM)

1. Familiarize CRSs with the M4L Program and its benefits to individual Marines and the Marine Corps as a whole.

2. Once a Marine has decided to leave active service, provide guidance to ensure:

a. CRSs provide information on opportunities for continued service in the Marine Corps Reserve.

b. CRSs provide information on the M4L Program. If a transitioning Marine chooses to participate, the CRS shall assist the Marine with entering contact information into the M4L database. This provides timely information to HTLs.

c. CRSs emphasize the benefits of the M4L program, but participation is voluntary.

(d) Director, Personnel and Family Readiness (MR)

1. Familiarize the Marine Corps Transition Assistance Management Program (TAMP) and Transition Assistance Program (TAP) personnel with the M4L program and its benefits to individual Marines and the Marine Corps as a whole.

2. Incorporate a brief on the M4L program into TAMP/TAP processes, emphasizing its opportunities and tangible benefits as well as the value of continued affiliation with the Marine Corps family.

(3) Commander, Marine Forces Reserve (COMMARFORRES)

(a) Familiarize Marines serving in the Marine Corps Reserve with the M4L program. Emphasize how it benefits all Marines and the central role that the Marine Corps Reserve will play in the program's success.

(b) Coordinate with the M4L HQ and the Director, Public Affairs to incorporate M4L into public affairs efforts in local communities.

(c) Join HTLs serving on active duty as excess to Marine Corps Reserve sites, as directed by the CMC(RA).

(d) As M4L develops and approaches full implementation, HTLs will transition to a drilling status. As directed by the CMC (RA), join HTLs to the M4L IMA Det.

(e) Continue to provide administrative support for HTLs as required.

(4) Commanding General, Marine Corps Recruiting Command (MCRC)

(a) Familiarize recruiters with the M4L program and the tangible benefits of our commitment to all Marines who serve honorably.

(b) Incorporate the M4L concept into recruiting strategy.

(c) Where feasible, provide facility support at designated recruiting stations for HTLs when local Marine Corps Reserve sites cannot adequately support the M4L effort or in areas where no Reserve site is located.

(5) Director, Public Affairs (PA)

(a) Familiarize Public Affairs Officers with the M4L Program and its benefits to individual Marines and the Marine Corps as a whole.

(b) Incorporate the M4L into public affairs' liaison efforts with Marine affiliated organizations that have a national headquarters in the greater Washington DC area.

(6) Director, Special Projects Directorate (SPD)

(a) Coordinate with Marine affiliated organizations to revitalize Marine Corps Coordinating Councils in local communities across the country.

(b) Incorporate M4L into SPD's efforts with Marine affiliated organizations.

c. Coordinating Instructions. The significant investment that the Marine Corps places on recruiting and training mandates that every leader create a command climate that makes quality Marines want to remain on active duty.

(1) Transition Vice Separation. In formal Marine Corps publications, written correspondence and daily vocabulary, the term "transition" replaces the term "separation" when referring to Marines who leave under honorable conditions. There are times when the term separation will still be required as a legal basis in compliance with the U.S.C., DoD issuances, and SECNAV directives. Where appropriate, changes to directives will be made as periodic revisions are required.

(2) Commander's Role. Leaders across the Marine Corps will improve the transition process by accomplishing the following:

(a) Placing a personal emphasis on the value, sense of pride, and dignity of having served honorably.

(b) Ensuring all transitioning Marines receive the appropriate level of recognition and appreciation for their contributions to the continued success of the Marine Corps.

(c) Providing all honorably transitioning Marines with a personalized letter of recognition that includes a synopsis of service attesting to the Marine's character and abilities. The letter should be directed to potential employers and educational institutions. A sample letter is provided at the enclosure.

(d) Ensuring attendance at TAMP seminars by all transitioning Marines at least 90 days prior to EAS.

(e) Ensuring that CRSs provide transitioning Marines with information on M4L. When a Marine shows interest in M4L, the CRS shall help the Marine enter his/her contact information into the M4L database. This ensures HTLs can contact transitioning Marines in a timely manner.

5. Administration and Logistics

a. Administration

(1) Marine Corps Reserve sites will join HTLs, as assigned by M4L HQ, as excess.

(2) COMMARFORRES will have Administrative Control (ADCON) of HTLs.

(3) By full implementation, the CMC (RA) and COMMARFORRES will coordinate the transfer of HTLs from an ADSW status to drilling members of the M4L IMA Det.

b. Logistics

(1) Marine For Life is a Total Force program and is a separate initiative in the POM.

(2) Office space will be provided by COMMARFORRES or CG, MCRC for HTLs at Marine Corps Reserve sites or RSs, respectively.

6. Command and Signal

a. Signal. This Order is effective the date signed.

b. Command. This Marine Corps Order is applicable to the Marine Corps Total Force.



ARNOLD L. PUNARO
By direction

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UNIT LETTERHEAD

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DATE

From: Commanding Officer, Unit
To: Sergeant John D. Smith

Subj: LETTER OF RECOGNITION

1. (Recognize the Marine for services rendered.)

Sergeant Smith, I would like to personally thank you for your honorable and faithful service while on active duty in the United States Marine Corps from 3 March 1997 through 15 May 2002.

2. (Describe the Marine's performance in his/her Military Occupational Specialty.)

For the past five years, you have consistently demonstrated an exceptionally high degree of military and professional excellence. Your active pursuit and in-depth knowledge of the Logistics field has been noteworthy. Your attention to detail, resourcefulness, keen insight, superb ability to develop and execute multiple tasks, and total dedication to duty has enhanced this command's morale, readiness status and ability to perform its mission effectively.

3. (Describe the Marine's personal character and qualities.)

Sergeant Smith, you have developed outstanding leadership skills and have continuously proven that you are capable of handling more responsibility. Your integrity, bearing and self-confidence make you a fine example of the caliber of Marine that provides the Marine Corps with its distinguished reputation.

4. (Describe the Marine's future growth potential.)

Sergeant Smith, you have my utmost confidence as you approach your new career and follow-on education. I believe that you will be successful in any future endeavor you choose. If you or others should require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact [provide contact information for you or designated point of contact for follow on contact up to 12-18 months in the future]. Best wishes.

H. G. Wells
LtCol USMC

ENCLOSURE (1)